

# **Mindanao (Philippines) - Urgent Appeal for Humanitarian Assistance for the Families Affected of Armed Conflict in Maguindanao**

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## **Urgent Appeal for Humanitarian Assistance for the Families Affected of Armed Conflict in Maguindanao, Mindanao, Philippines**

On December 24, 2017 at around 10:00 in the evening, about 61 Teduray families in Sitio Makun, Barangay Limpongo of Datu Hoffer Municipality in Maguindanao province evacuated due to attacks made by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF). BIFF is a faction group of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), one of the revolutionary fronts in Mindanao that is now under peace negotiation with the Philippine Government.

The said attack was the beginning of armed confrontations between the armed forces of the Philippine government and the BIFF that further displaced Teduray and Maguindanaon families from Mt. Firis Complex. The complex is a territorial boundary of the municipalities of Datu Unsay, Datu Saudi and Datu Hoffer in which the three claims jurisdiction over it. The complex, that is said to be sacred and possesses the tribal history of the Tedurays in defending their lands and identity from the colonizers, is a house of 732 families (3,278 individuals) both Teduray and Maguindanaon though it has been said that majority of the people living there are Tedurays.

Teduray is one of the indigenous tribes in the province who have long been in their struggle for right to self-determination within a Bangsamoro (Islamized) autonomous region while Maguindanaon is one of the tribal groups of the Islamized population in Mindanao.

As of January 11, 2018, there is an estimated of 1,149 individuals affected by the armed confrontations and are seeking shelters in different evacuation sites or host families. Some villages near the complex are now uninhabited due to the on-going military operations. Aside from displacement of affected families, experience burning of their houses and destruction of their properties, disturbance in their economic activities, suspension of classes, harassments from armed groups are continuously being reported among others. As of January 8, 2018, there are 10 individuals killed from the gun fight - 8 from BIFF forces, 1 from the military and a civilian killed by a landmine bomb explosion.

As of this writing, there are minimal support extended to the affected families from the local government units and the situation has not been captured by the national media. In response to the emergency situation, MIHANDs' member-organizations in Cotabato City and Maguindanao have quickly activated the cluster's Incident Command System in close coordination with the Teduray's Indigenous People's Emergency Center and conduct Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment and incident report validation to the areas affected by the ongoing armed conflicts. Consolidation of these data is ongoing.



*The sacred Batew at Mt. Firis. Photo Courtesy from IPDev*

It is in this context that the Multi-stakeholders Initiatives for Humanitarian Action against Disasters (MiHANDs) - South Central Mindanao cluster appeal for any support - in cash and/or in kind to help address the most urgent needs (e.g. food, drinking water, medicines, sleeping materials, cooking and eating utensils, etc.) of the displaced families in Maguindanao.

You may send your help and donations through MiHANDs bank account below.

Account Name : Mindanao Humanitarian Action Network

Account No. : 9353-1085-54

Bank name : Bank of Philippine Islands (BPI)

Bank Address : Quezon Avenue, Iligan City

SWIFT Code : BOIPHMM

Please notify us via email at [mihands.phils@gmail.com](mailto:mihands.phils@gmail.com) or by calling 064 421 1369 about your donation for proper acknowledgment and accounting. We will acknowledge your support accordingly and keep you posted on the progress of our actions at our Facebook page Multi-Stakeholders Initiatives for Humanitarian Actions Against Disasters.

We look forward to your immediate attention to this appeal. Thank you very much!

Sincerely yours,

**Yennah F. Torres**

Chairperson

Multi-stakeholders Initiative for Humanitarian Action against Disasters (Mi-HANDs)

37 Tulingan Street, Usman Subdivision

Bagua 2, 9600 Cotabato City

Tel: +63 64 421 1369 (Landline); 09294867924 (mobile)

Email: [yen\\_29@yahoo.com](mailto:yen_29@yahoo.com)

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